THE EUGENIC ORIGINS OF INDIANA'S MUSCATATUCK COLONY: 1920-2005

Abigail Nicole Bragg

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Master's Thesis Committee

_____
Elizabeth Nelson, Ph.D., Chair

_____
Anita Morgan, Ph.D.

_____
Kevin Cramer, Ph.D.

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My hope is that this thesis inspires Hoosiers to learn about every aspect of our history and to not be quick to judge the people who came before us. Rather that instead we examine all evidence and attempt to comprehend why people of the past made the decisions they did. Only then can we learn about our truly complex past and keep moving forward.

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This thesis examines the widely unknown history and origins of Muscatatuck Colony, located in Butlerville, Indiana. The national eugenics movement impacted the United States politically, medically, legally, and socially. While the United States established mental institutions prior to the eugenics movement, many institutions, including ones in Indiana, were founded as eugenic tools to advance the agenda of achieving a "purer" society. Muscatatuck was one such state institution founded during this national movement.

I explore various elements that made the national eugenics movement effective, how Indiana helped advance the movement, and how all these elements impacted Muscatatuck's founding. I investigate the language used to describe people that were considered "mentally inferior," specifically who the "feeble-minded" were and how Americans were grouped into this category. I research commonly held beliefs by eugenicists of this time-period, eugenic methods implemented, and how these discussions and actions led to the establishment of Muscatatuck in 1920.

Muscatatuck Colony, though a byproduct of the national eugenics movement, outlived this scientific effort. Toward the mid and late twentieth century, Muscatatuck leadership executed institutional change to best reflect American society's evolving thoughts on mental health and how best to treat people with mental disabilities. Muscatatuck Colony reveals a complicated narrative of how best to treat or care for people within these institutions, a complex narrative that many mental institutions share.

Elizabeth Nelson, Ph.D., Chair

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Introduction: A Pure Society: The Evolution of the United States Eugenics Movement and Language

> "…The new duty which is supposed to be exercised concurrently with, and not in opposition to the old ones upon which the social fabric depends, is an endeavor to further evolution, especially that of the human race" (Sir Francis Galton, 1883).[1]

British philosopher Sir Francis Galton originally devised the term "eugenics" in 1883. Galton believed that some people were "well-fitted" for life (healthy, capable, above average people) and that these traits were inheritable. Therefore, the well-born should reproduce. Such "positive eugenics" suggested that genetically exceptional people should reproduce and continue to improve society. However, after Galton created the term "positive eugenics," the term "negative eugenics" materialized in the United States. Rather than focus their efforts on encouraging those who were "fitted" for life to reproduce, United States eugenicists instead discouraged the "ill-fitted" (unhealthy, incapable, under average people) from reproducing. United States eugenicists believed that if the "well-born" could pass on their traits, so could the "inferior." Negative eugenics discouraged reproduction among certain races and groups of people labeled as "degenerates." Galton's eugenics concepts grew into a national movement in the United States from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The movement especially gained momentum by the early 1900s after American eugenicist Charles Benedict Davenport founded the United States' national Eugenics Record Office in Cold Spring

[1] Milo Keynes, *Sir Francis Galton, FRS, the Legacy of His Ideas,* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 1993), 89, accessed on June 30, 2020 at: https://books.google.com/books?id=Ts2vCwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

Harbor, New York (1910-1939).[2] Davenport founded this organization to discourage the "least fittest" from reproducing, while also encouraging the "fittest" to multiply the American population.[3]

While this thesis specifically focuses on Indiana during the eugenics movement and the institutionalization of the "feeble-minded," it is important to note that eugenics impacted the western world more broadly both in science and in social policies. Eugenics was specifically used as a tool through the sciences to justify underlying racial prejudices, to uphold socioeconomic expectations on how a "normal" person should function in society, and to maintain an overall "pure" social order. The creation of the scientific method between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries brought vast experimentations and discoveries which would uphold and influence eugenic practices in the U.S. by the late nineteenth century.[4]

Around the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, scientists grew increasingly curious about different mental human variations, how to measure these differences, how to examine the physiology of people, and how these variations effected society. These growing curiosities and investigations eventually led to the institutionalization of people all for the sake of maintaining "social order."[5] Historian Madeline Burghardt argues that there were three major studies which took place from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries that led to the institutionalization, segregation, and colonization of

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[2] Natalie Ball, "Davenport, Charles," EugenicsArchives.org, National Human Genome Research Institute, accessed online on March 15, 2019 at: https://eugenicsarchive.ca/discover/connections/5233ce935c2ec500000000ab.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Madeline C. Burghardt, *Broken: Institutions, Families, and the Construction of Intellectual Disability,* (Chicago: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018), 27.
[5] Ibid., 27.

people deemed "intellectually inferior." First, around the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, biologists in Europe dedicated their studies to the varying races of people and how each race differed from one another. Originally meant to merely identify differences among groups of people geographically and culturally, these studies ultimately led to scientists believing that some races of people were superior to others. Scientists then categorized and assigned rankings based on a race's "putative worth."[6] This line of reasoning helped Europeans scientifically "uphold" that they were superior to other races. These rankings even influenced Europeans to act on colonial practices such as slavery.[7] This first form of investigation on the "deviations" of humanity laid the groundwork for more studies world-wide to inspire this concept of eugenics.

The second major event that Burghardt discusses involved a Belgian mathematician, Adolphe Quetelet (1796-1874). In the nineteenth century, Quetelet developed theories about the "average man," what made a man "average," and what made a man "under-average." He influenced the development of "social numbers" which were used to describe "the wealth and strength of the state," as well as "inform social policy."[8] Within Quetelet's era emerged the idea of the "other," or, the person or people outside of the "average" category. In fact, disability studies scholar Lennard Davis argues that the "disabled person" was created from this era through scientific and linguistic advancements.[9] This idea that within every population there is an "other" type of person outside the norm, not only impacted Europe's perceptions on eugenics by the time Sir

[6] Ibid., 28.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.

Galton coined this term, but it would impact the United States' perception on who the "others" were as well.

The final major scientific development which Burghardt argues impacted the classification and categorization of people was the studies of Darwin. A combination of the studies of human variation, natural selection, and evolution further promoted a eugenic ideology. Scientists, scholars, and physicians who read Darwin's *On the Origins of Species* used his writings to uphold "scientific racism."[10] Or rather, while scientists agreed on mankind's common origins, they believed that certain deviations Darwin described in his writings applied to mankind in terms of their being "linear hierarchies of races according to mental and moral worth."[11] Such ideologies further justified what European biologists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries believed, that certain races of people were inferior to others.

Darwin's theories even impacted the socio-economic aspects of society, especially in the United States. The term "social-Darwinism" took root and it became more socially acceptable to view certain groups of people as more inferior compared to others. The further creation of "othering" certain groups of people, as will be shown throughout the course of this thesis, led to the categorization of different people based on their supposed mental capabilities. By the time the United States eugenics movement began, various classifications of who the "inferiors" exactly were began to surface and Americans viewed the increasing population of "intellectually inferior" people as a travesty. Many believed that the people who were "governed by the harsh dictates of

[10] Ibid., 29.
[11] Ibid.

nature," should not mingle with "average" people and taint their communities.[12] Americans feared that they might spread immorality, thus disrupting the "social order," or that the "intellectually inferior" simply would not contribute to the economy and even become a burden on society. Such fears led to the passing of multiple legislations to restrict the rights of people considered "mentally defective." Various groups of people were targeted based on their socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and race.[13]

This thesis places the United States eugenics movement within the context of Indiana history and the founding of state institutions to house the "feeble-minded." Its focus is the Muscatatuck Colony, which was opened in the southern part of the state in 1920. To set the stage for this analysis of a single institution, the remainder of the introduction will discuss institution building in the United States and Indiana, the evolution of language and classification of the "feeble-minded," as well as eugenic ideologies as they appeared in the early twentieth century.

[12] Ibid.
[13] Allison Carey, *On the Margins of Citizenship: Intellectual Disability and Civil Rights in Twentieth-Century America,* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 52.

Formation of Mental Institutions

While the United States eugenics movement did not officially begin until the 1880s, after Galton first coined the term "eugenics," the first mental institution opened in the late eighteenth century before the United States was a nation. On October 12, 1773, Eastern State Hospital opened in Williamsburg, Virginia.[14] In the early nineteenth century, people with mental disabilities often resided in prisons and faced harsh treatment. Reformers and proponents of social change who witnessed the ill-treatment of people with mental illnesses who dwelt in prisons or in poorhouses, petitioned states to construct "civic institutions" to help the varying "social ills" that plagued the United States.[15] These social ills did not just pertain to the mentally ill. The reform movement also included institutions for the deaf, blind, orphans, poor, and the physically sick.[16] Following the activism of these reformers, state governments passed legislation to open more state entities, including institutions for Americans with mental disabilities, by the mid-1800s.

The state of Massachusetts set precedent by opening one of the first of many state-run mental institutions throughout the country. In 1825, Reverend Louis Dwight

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[14] Garry G. Kiskinis and John D. Keegan, "Building on History at Eastern State Hospital: The Hospital Was Founded in 1773, and next Year Virginia Will Open a New Facility for Adults," *Behavioral Healthcare*, no. 7 (2009): 41, accessed online on June 26, 2020 at: https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsgih&AN=edsgcl.211808224&site=eds-live.

[15] David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 209-210, accessed online on June 26, 2020 at: https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.ulib.uits.iu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=101514&site=eds-live.

[16] Ibid., 292.

established the Prison Discipline Society.[17] This organization ensured that prisoners with mental disabilities received proper care and treatment and simultaneously protested prison policies.[18] The Society influenced the formation in 1827 of a state legislative committee in Massachusetts to reform prison policies.

The movement to create state-sponsored mental institutions gained momentum. Dorothea Dix, an advocate for this movement, pushed for the establishment of more asylums that would expand into the Midwest. Originally a schoolteacher, Dix began her advocacy work for mental institutions in 1841. Dix believed the nation needed to improve its care methods for people with mental disabilities. She toured the country and visited various prisons and jails by 1847.[19] She presented her findings to the Massachusetts state government and supported and helped design mental institutions in New Jersey and Illinois.[20]

As the 1800s progressed more scholars and activists pushed for more specialized facilities, primarily for people with mental disabilities. In 1848 the Legislature of

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[17] Members of the Prison Discipline Society (1826-1854) sought to improve public prisons. They collected statistics and facts on current prison practices and treatments through maintaining communication and conducting in-person visits to prisons throughout the state. This society expanded across multiple states and specifically pushed for proper housing for prisoners, gospel reading to prisoners, and common schooling and programs be executed. For more information visit: "Guide to the Prison Discipline Society," Simmons.edu.

[18] "Guide to the Prison Discipline Society (Boston, Mass.) Records, 1826-1854," Simmons.edu, Simmons University, accessed online on June 10, 2020 at: https://beatleyweb.simmons.edu/collectionguides/CharitiesCollection/CC001.html.

[19] Margaret Muckenhoupt, *Dorothea Dix: Advocate for Mental Health Care*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 71, accessed online on June 26, 2020 at: https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.ulib.uits.iu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=160273&site=eds-live.

[20] Ibid., 65 and 71.

Massachusetts published a report, authored by Samuel G. Howe, that outlined the growing problem of "idiocy" in the state. According to the report, physicians had condemned 574 people to "hopeless idiocy" in the state of Massachusetts.[21] The report defined anyone who was considered unable to enter a legal contract, care for themselves, or known to be an "idiot" by neighbors and families. The report proposed that the state take "… measures . . . to rescue this most unfortunate class from the dreadful degradation in which they now grovel…This class of persons is always a burden upon the public."[22] By this time, physicians believed that "idiots" should be segregated from the rest of American society to live in institutions under strict surveillance. When the national eugenics movement began in the 1880s, there became various sub-categories of "idiocy" which eventually sparked the creation of the term, "feeble-mindedness."

[21] Steven Noll and James W. Trent, *Mental Retardation in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 23.
[22] Ibid., 23.

Categorization of People with Mental Disabilities

Various categories have been used to describe Americans deemed "mentally inferior." A term used throughout this thesis is "feeble-minded" because eugenicists, physicians, and Muscatatuck leadership from the early twentieth century pre-dominantly applied this term to those they considered mentally deficient.[23]

In the broadest sense, there were two groups of Americans: ordinary citizens and citizens who fell under the general category of "mental inferiority." As early as the 1820s, eugenicists linked "mental inferiority" to various dependencies, such as underachievement, criminality, gambling, and poverty.[24] In the early 1800s, states and local governments institutionalized many people deemed as "mentally inferior" in different entities such as prisons for criminals, poorhouses for the poor, or insane asylums for the insane. Before the eugenics movement, people in these institutions were meant to be segregated for the sake of control and protection from abuses they might face living on the streets (even though plenty of abuse went on in these institutions). However, by the late 1800s, when the national eugenics movement began, state institutional leaders wanted to use their facilities to separate "mentally inferior" individuals from communities. Leaders throughout the political and medical fields believed that for the sake of a pure society these "defective" people needed to be detached from everyone to not negatively influence their communities or to not reproduce this defectiveness. Once physicians identified these "degenerates," the doctors placed them in specific medical

[23] Note that throughout this paper, I put quotations around certain words like "feeble-minded" or "mentally inferior." This is purposeful to show that these are not my own words I am using to describe different groups of people. Rather I am using language associated with the time-period I explore throughout this paper.
[24] Ibid., 10.

categories that defined which mental disability they supposedly possessed. According to historian Jason S. Lantzer, once the eugenics movement started, eugenicists used three primary categories of mental disabilities in Indiana: the insane, people with epilepsy, and the feeble-minded.[25]

While separate studies and resources exist about people who were considered insane and people with epilepsy, this thesis focuses on the "feeble-minded" and who was placed in this categorization during the eugenics movement. However, before delving into who the "feeble-minded" were, it is important to know the major differences among these three mental categories. In terms of who was "insane," by the late 1800s and early 1900s, physicians and eugenicists had differentiated "feeble-mindedness" from "insanity." In 1912, Arthur C. Rogers, superintendent of the Minnesota School for the Feeble-Minded, discussed this difference and described the causation of "feeble-mindedness." His categorization separated "this group of people from the insane-in whom the mental functions deviate from normal after the evolution of physical growth has been completed."[26] In 1919, legal scholar Henry W. Ballantine further supported the difference between the "insane" and the "feeble-minded" when he suggested the "feeble-minded" have their own state institutions. First, he argued that the "feeble-minded" would never be normal citizens, which is why they needed to be segregated. Second, because they needed to be segregated, Ballantine proposed more homes for the "feeble-

[25] Jason S. Lantzer, "The Indiana Way of Eugenics: Sterilization Laws, 1907-74," in *A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era,* ed. Paul A. Lombardo (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 26-45, 32.
[26] Arthur C. Rogers, "Classification of the Feeble-Minded Based on Mental Age," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Medicine* 13 (1912): 2, accessed online on June 13, 2019 at: https://bir.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/32453/629 p-34.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

minded" in his state of Illinois. He envisioned these institutions for the "feeble-minded" would serve as a "half-way house between the penitentiary and the insane asylum…"[27] Here, Ballantine acknowledged that "feeble-minded" people needed to be housed separate from the "insane." In his words, this meant establishing an institution that was somewhere in between an asylum and an institution like a jail or prison.

Epilepsy was the second of Indiana's three primary categories of mental defectiveness. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries people considered epilepsy as a mental disorder different than "insanity," but closer to "feeble-mindedness." In 1915 Charles Benedict Davenport published *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics.* Davenport explored how scholars and physicians of his time defined epilepsy and where people with epilepsy fell in the categorization of mental illness. He defined epilepsy as a disorder of the brain which caused a person to experience convulsions or "fits."[28] Davenport suggested that one could use these two words "almost" interchangeably. He also claimed that if two epileptic parents have a child, the child had an increased risk of "feeble-mindedness."[29] People with epilepsy were segregated from the rest of society in jails and county poorhouses because by the nineteenth century, physicians associated this mental illness with violent outbursts, anxiety, and hallucinations.[30]

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[27] Henry W. Ballantine, "Criminal Responsibility of the Insane and Feeble Minded," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 9, no. 4 (1919): 499, accessed online on May 10, 2020 at: https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1665&context=jclc).

[28] Charles Benedict Davenport, (1911), *Hereditary in Relation to Eugenics* (Ostara Publications, 2019), 72.

[29] Ibid., 72.

[30] "The History of Stigma of Epilepsy," *Epilepsia* 44, no. 6 (2003): 12-14, 12, accessed online on May 2, 2020 at: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1046/j.1528-1157.44.s.6.2.x.

"Feeble-mindedness" was the third of Indiana's three major mental illness categories that caused someone to be institutionalized. Eugenicists and doctors often used "idiocy" interchangeably with "feeble-mindedness" before the latter term became popular in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Before the eugenics movement, major thinkers of the 1850s debated the exact definition of "idiocy" as it encompassed a wide range of people. Historian James Trent discusses how Hervey Wilbur, M.D, developed definitions of different levels of idiocy in 1852. First, **simulative idiocy** defined a person as "merely retarded" and asserted that the individual could be trained and prepared for "the ordinary duties and enjoyments of humanity."[31] Second, **higher-grade idiocy** meant that a person was capable of eventually entering common schools where they would be qualified for "civil usefulness and social happiness."[32] **Lower-grade idiocy** defined people as able to develop healthy habits in their lives, have a reasonable career under the supervision of their families, and live relatively normal lives.[33] Finally, **incurables** were people "for whom education was a goal in itself."[34] By the late 1800s "idiocy" became a part of a larger categorization, "feeble-mindedness." In fact, by the late 1800s, eugenicists considered "feeble-mindedness" the most important mental disorder. Doctors diagnosed "feeble-mindedness" not just based on low IQ scores, but also based on someone's "promiscuity, criminality, and social dependency."[35]

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[31] James Trent, *Inventing the Feeble Mind: A History of Mental Retardation in the United States*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 1994), 17.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] "Mental Illness," EugenicsArchives.org, National Human Genome Research Institute, accessed online on March 15, 2019 at: http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/html/eugenics/static/themes/9.html.

By the early twentieth century, scientists created scientific methods to classify the "feeble-minded" in specific categories. In 1908, eugenicist Henry Goddard invented an IQ test to examine if a person was "mentally deficient." This exam specifically targeted lower-class Americans and spotted supposed characteristic flaws such as poor judgement, a "deficient personal character," and social adaptation. [36] In 1910, the American Association for the Study of the Feeble-Minded established a more effective examination to determine if an individual was "feeble-minded." Unlike Goddard's IQ test, this exam placed the "feeble-minded" into different categories based on a person's supposed level of development. Scientists created three different levels of "feeble-mindedness;" idiots, imbeciles, and morons.[37]

Idiots were on the lowest functional level of "feeble-minded." Their mental age was of a one or two-year-old who could never learn basic self-care techniques or basic communication skills.[38] **Imbeciles**, scientists believed, attained the mental age of a three to seven-year-old and were able to independently care for some of their basic needs, but not all. They were also unable to educate themselves and effectively work or hold a job to make their own living.[39] Finally, **morons**, who made up the largest portion of the "feeble-minded" population (about eighty-five percent), were viewed as the highest functioning form of the "feeble-minded." They possessed the mental age range of seven to twelve, could benefit from education and work, had the potential to earn a decent independent living, and were not "easily identified as disabled."[40] These were the kinds of people that

[36] Carey, *On the Margins of Citizenship,* 63.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.

eugenicists, community leaders, and the general public feared most because they could supposedly pass off as normal citizens since the "morons" lacked "direction, solid judgement, and emotional control."[41]

Once the "feeble-minded" were defined and categorized, this marginalized group was subjected to rights restrictions. Eugenicists of the movement developed ideas of how to control and decrease this population. These eugenic discussions and practices would impact the founding of Muscatatuck Colony in Jennings County, Indiana, a state institution originally created for the purpose of institutionalizing the "feeble-minded."

[41] Ibid.

Overview of Eugenics on the National Level

While language and categories developed by scientists and scholars laid the foundation of the national eugenics movement, eugenics took on various forms. Historian Martin Pernick briefly examines two tools used to practice eugenics in his book, *The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of "Defective" Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures since 1915*. The text opens with the story of Illinois doctor Harry J. Haiselden who in 1915 allowed some of the babies he delivered who he deemed "defective" to die.[42] He did this to prevent "defective" babies from growing into "defective" adults. If these babies became defective adults then they would intermingle with "regular" people, reproduce, and "taint" their communities.[43] To some eugenicists, letting "defectives" die in infancy was simply another form of purifying society.

Another major form of eugenics was compulsory sterilizations. Pernick briefly outlines other "benefits" eugenicists saw in sterilizations and provides general demographics on the people sterilized in the 1920s when he says, "…eugenic reasoning also led many American states to legislate compulsory sterilization of criminals, the insane, and the retarded…"[44] Pernick explains why Dr. Haiselden, a doctor who performed sterilizations in the early 1900s, promoted them. He reasoned that sterilizations prevented couples who might have a defective child from reproducing, thus

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[42] Martin S. Pernick, *The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of "Defective" Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures since 1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3.
[43] Though I am not quoting a specific source, I am using quotes to emphasize that these are not my words or ways of categorizing anyone with mental illness. I am simply using these words to paint a clearer picture about how eugenicists viewed certain groups of the American population.
[44] Ibid., 22.

helping him avoid the misfortune of letting defective children die once he delivered them.[45] Pernick goes beyond explaining that sterilizations stopped certain groups of people from reproducing and delves into why physicians like Dr. Haiselden preferred sterilizing people. In their minds, this procedure was better than delivering "defective" babies and letting them die.

Compared to sterilization and selective medical neglect, a much more prevalent eugenic practice was one that extended from an older practice in place before the eugenics movement: institutionalizing, or, segregating people with mental disabilities, such as the "feeble-minded." Faculty member and scholar of the Department of Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois, Sharon Snyder and David T. Mitchell, in *Cultural Locations of Disability,* examines the history of the institutionalization of the "feeble-minded" and how they became a sub-culture in American society during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The authors describe "cultural spaces that have been set out exclusively on behalf of disabled citizens, such as nineteenth century charity systems; institutions for the feebleminded during the eugenics period; the international disability research industry; sheltered workshops for the 'multi-handicapped'; medically based and documentary film representations of the disability research industry; and current academic research trends on disability."[46] Eugenicists and physicians believed segregating them from their communities would prevent the "feeble-minded" from mingling and reproducing with "normal" citizens.

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[45] Ibid., 75.
[46] Sharon L. Snyder and David T. Mitchell, *Cultural Locations of Disability* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 3.

Various eugenicists supported institutionalizing the "feeble-minded" and believed it was best for American society. For example, Virginia's Secretary of the State Board of Charities Joseph Mastin, in the *Journal of Psycho-Asthenics: Devoted to the Care, Training and Treatment of the Feeble-Minded and of the Epileptic* from 1916-1917, discussed the benefits of placing people in institutions in his article, "New Colony Plan for the Feeble-Minded." Mastin explained his perspective on why colonies (later discussed in chapter one) should exist around the country and why colonies should be used to segregate and cure those deemed feeble-minded. Mastin asserted, "When all the men have been gathered into colonies…when the women have been brought to the country and placed on farms where they can help earn their living…then we can look forward with confidence to the coming of an era when feeble-mindedness will become extinct, mental disease will vanish and crime and pauperism will be reduced to a minimum."[47] Mastin revealed a commonly held opinion among eugenicists of his time--to abolish the "feeble-minded," segregation was necessary. This idea became popular in Indiana which led to the establishment of Muscatatuck as a sister colony to catch the overflow of Fort Wayne's inmates. To eugenicists like Mastin, such institutions helped society by keeping the "feeble-minded" separated from everyone else and they aided the "feeble-minded" by giving them a space to live and by supposedly providing them with space to learn new skills and live productive lives.

[47] Fred Kuhlmann, Joseph Mastin, Joseph Byers, George Bliss, Edward Ochsner, J.M. McCallie, Helen MacMurchy, Guy Fernald, V.V Anderson, George Wallace, and Ada Fitts, *Journal of Psycho-Asthenics: Devoted to the Care, Training and Treatment of the Feeble-Minded and of the Epileptic* (1916), Pp. 3-130, 35, accessed online on January 25, 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3714077;view=1up;seq=7.

While various physicians and eugenicists supported institutionalization of the "feeble-minded" in the early 1900s, some disagreed with this trend. The Director of the Psychological Services Bureau in Minnesota, Fredrick Kuhlmann played an integral role in identifying "feeble-minded" people in Minnesota. However, despite his work of identifying "feeble-minded" people, Kuhlmann did not necessarily believe segregation was the best eugenics method.[48] The number of "feeble-minded" people discouraged Kuhlmann and he disliked the belief that they should be segregated in institutions.[49] Instead, he developed an IQ test for the state and started testing schoolchildren. For the children identified as "feeble-minded," Kuhlmann instituted special classes in the public-school system. His work indicates that while Kuhlmann supported a smaller form of segregation (i.e. separating children in different classes based on their mental abilities), he disagreed with completely isolating the "feeble-minded" away from the rest of society. Kuhlmann's statement reveals the complexity of institutionalizing people in the early 1900s. Not all eugenicists agreed with using state institutions to segregate the "feeble-minded." However, state institutions predominantly applied this eugenic tool compared to others during this national movement.

[48] "Public Welfare Department: Psychological Services Bureau: An Inventory of Its Records at the Minnesota Historical Society," Collection Finding Aids Minnesota Historical Society, accessed online on April 12, 2020 at: http://www2.mnhs.org/library/findaids/gr01430.xml.
[49] Kuhlmann, Mastin, Byers, Bliss, Ochsner, McCallie, MacMurchy, Fernald, Anderson, Wallace, and Fitts, *Journal of Psycho-Asthenics,* 5.

Eugenics in Indiana Institutions

Most of the American states participated in some form of eugenics or "social hygiene" in hopes to improve their communities. Indiana specifically was a key player in this national movement. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the state of Indiana had institutionalized people who were viewed as "intellectually inferior." Indiana also led the nation in legalizing compulsory sterilizations when the Indiana state legislature passed the first sterilization law in the United States in 1907, a significant victory for eugenicists since sterilization procedures took away a person's ability to reproduce.

Indiana leaders wanted to increase the number of state institutions. By the 1880s, the new medical era was "rapidly expanding" and reformers, physicians, and state leaders pushed to establish more state-run institutions for the "mentally disturbed."[50] As the eugenics movement progressed, Indiana state and community leaders founded more state institutions for the eugenic purpose of segregating people and attempting to "purify" society, while also treating people with mental illnesses. The creation of Indiana's institutions reveals the state's complex history with the treatment of mental illness and how Indiana advanced the national eugenics movement. In 1883 Dr. Joseph Goodwin, also the superintendent for the Hospital for the Insane in Indianapolis which at this time was overcrowded, led a successful campaign to "obtain legislative authorization" for the creation of three new state institutions.[51] These institutions were Northern Hospital at

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[50] Clifton Phillips, (2016) *Indiana In Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880–1920*, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1968), 478, accessed online on June 29, 2020 at: https://books.google.com/books?id=PYMnDQAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=469&f=false.
[51] Ibid., 478.

Logansport, Eastern Hospital in Richmond, and Southern Hospital in Evansville, all three opened by 1890.[52] Likewise, in 1890, the School for Feeble-Minded Youth, what would be the sister institution for Muscatatuck Colony, permanently re-located to Fort Wayne where it would remain until its closing in 2007.[53]

However, by the turn of the century, after the eugenics movement was in full swing, these three state institutions did not have enough space to house all the "mentally defective" people. This led to the establishment of more state institutions and a county asylum with the purpose of segregating people away from the rest of society. In 1900, the Marion County Asylum for the Incurable Insane was formed in the town of Julietta. Shortly after in 1911, the Hospital for Insane Criminals was founded in Michigan City. By the early 1900s, the Indiana State Board of Charities reported that there were thousands of people that were insane and "feeble-minded." Likewise, by 1905, another "class of defectives" caught the eyes of Indiana leaders - people with epilepsy.[54] Through the authorization of the Indiana General Assembly, state leaders officially founded the Indiana Village for Epileptics in 1907.[55]

Indiana leaders throughout the early twentieth century continued to establish state institutions in hopes to control these marginalized groups of people. One institution that Indiana leaders and policymakers established during the national eugenics movement was the Muscatatuck Colony in Jennings County. This establishment, which underwent various institutional changes both during and after the national eugenics movement,

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 479.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

opened in 1920 and closed in 2005.[56] It is important to note that Muscatatuck possessed multiple names in the duration of its existence as a mental institution: 1920-1931, "The Indiana Farmer Colony for the Feeble-Minded;" 1931-1941, "The Muscatatuck Colony;" 1941-1965, "The Muscatatuck State School;" 1965-1985, "The Muscatatuck State Hospital and Training Center;" and from 1985 to when the hospital closed in 2005, it was called, "The Muscatatuck State Developmental Center."[57] Today it is called the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center. Throughout this thesis the institution is referred to as "Muscatatuck Colony" or "Muscatatuck," even though these names changed throughout its lifespan. Muscatatuck's creation represents a culmination of Indiana eugenicists' attempts to achieve a purer society, as well as reveals how perceptions of mental illness evolved beyond the national eugenics movement.

[56] State institution that were for the "feeble-minded," along with asylums for the insane, were also known as mental institutions. Which is why throughout this paper I refer to Muscatatuck as both a state and mental institution.
[57] "IARA: Containers," Indiana Archives and Records of Administration Research Indiana Catalog," IN.gov, accessed online on April 4, 2019 at: https://www.in.gov/iara/3260.htm.

Three Hoosier Leaders in the Eugenics Movement

Historian of science and professor at the State University of New York, Elof Axel Carlson, examines the lives of three Hoosier eugenicists who impacted the legalization of compulsory sterilizations in his chapter of Lombardo's book, "The Hoosier Connection: Compulsory Sterilization as Moral Hygiene." He evaluates the lives of Oscar McCulloch (1843-1891), David Starr Jordan (1851-1931), and Harry Clay Sharp (1871-1940). Each man served as a vehicle to expand the Hoosier state's role in the national eugenics movement, including legalizing compulsory sterilizations. Understanding their stories is vital to understanding how Indiana became the first state to legalize compulsory sterilizations, a policy that Muscatatuck followed.

Oscar McCulloch, raised and educated in Illinois, felt called to go into the ministry and became a pastor in Wisconsin. He eventually moved to Indianapolis where he served as pastor. Using his business skills that his father ingrained in him, McCulloch saved the church and formed excellent connections with charities and other community organizations in Indianapolis. McCulloch accepted Darwinian evolution. He believed that to understand the universe God created one needed to use science.

In the late 1880s McCulloch produced detailed studies on a group of people he nicknamed, "a tribe of degenerates.[58]" Carlson explains how this group, later referred to as the Tribe of Ishmael were, "an impoverished group that lived along the banks of the White River who had first come to Indiana when it was not yet a state."[59] This group

[58] Elof Axel Carlson, "The Hoosier Connection: Compulsory Sterilization as Moral Hygiene," in *A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era,* ed. Paul A. Lombardo (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2011), 11-26, 15.
[59] Ibid., 15.

often spent their winters in Indianapolis where they held odd jobs and never owned permanent property. The tribe claimed they were the descendants of escaped indentured servants, English tinkers, and escaped or freed slaves. McCulloch could not comprehend why this group preferred to migrate as opposed to settling in one spot. He believed they were a "parasitic race" and that they should be "isolated and prevented from reproducing."[60] McCulloch entertained the thought of taking the children from the tribe and raising them in traditional American homes since he viewed them as "devil grass" that could be controlled through being "uprooted."[61] McCulloch viewed the Tribe of Ishmael as “feeble-minded” because of their race, lower economic status, and how they lived outside of social norms. Though McCulloch did not go far with his individual ideas of eugenics, he did set the stage for others to not only share his ideas, but to act on them as well. He inspired David Starr Jordan to further pursue this idea.

David Starr Jordan. After earning a bachelor's degree at Cornell University and a master's degree at Harvard, Jordan enrolled in a one-year proprietary program at the Medical College of Indianapolis in 1875. As he progressed in his medical education Jordan became more prominent and well-known in academic circles. In 1879 Jordan left Indianapolis and headed for Bloomington where he became Indiana University's (IU) president in 1885.

Jordan and McCulloch crossed paths at church, and they maintained correspondence until McCulloch's death in 1891. McCulloch introduced Jordan to the Tribe of Ishmael and Jordan provided McCulloch with sources that helped McCulloch

[60] Ibid., 16.
[61] Ibid.

uphold his beliefs that the Tribe of Ishmael were “degenerates.”[62] However, Jordan’s eugenic leanings did not stop with his study on the Tribe of Ishmael, the concept of eugenics even made its way into Jordan’s teachings. Jordan spent thirty years at IU where he taught his students that while all of them were superior to people who did not attend college, they either possessed less or more mental superiority than their peers. He wrote various books that promoted a eugenics outlook on society. Jordan felt it was "an evolutionary obligation for humanity to cull the least productive of its members and to encourage the best and the brightest to reproduce more of their kind."[63]

Oddly enough, Jordan was a pacifist because of his eugenics outlook. He believed that war caused the healthiest and ablest men to go off to war and get killed, thus leaving the "dull and physically weak" behind.[64] Jordan took McCulloch's ideas about parasitic human groups to the next level, published his own works in academic circles, and taught how the answer to a wholesome and healthy society lay in eugenics. His teachings went on to inspire Dr. Harry Sharp, who became one of the famous leaders of the eugenics movement and became the first man to successfully introduce and practice sexual sterilization in the United States.

Dr. Harry Sharp. Born and raised in Indiana, Sharp completed medical school in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1896. In his studies Sharp developed a passion for public health and hygiene, whether this involved water purification, meat inspections, or garbage disposals. Sharp first served as a prison physician in Jeffersonville (across the Ohio River from Louisville). Prisoners had terrible health and the physical state of the

[62] Ibid., 17.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.

prison was no better. Prisoners died of tuberculosis, typhus, and typhoid fever.[65] Prison staff fed prisoners mush and failed to stock the kitchen with proper meals. Each morning guards also struggled to simply hose away the urine and feces from the cells.

In response, Sharp documented the horrendous conditions in his biannual reports and petitioned to the governor asserting that while prisoners "surrendered their freedom" that did not mean they "surrender their humanity."[66] Prison leadership eventually implemented changes and a few years later Sharp happily reported that death rates declined.

Along with his views on physical health hygiene, Sharp held a strong position on mental health hygiene. In his first published work he explained that women typically suffered from “hysteria” or an emotional breakdown, whereas men usually suffered from nervous exhaustion.[67] European physician Herbert Spencer, who coined the term *Social Darwinism*, inspired Sharp. Spencer asserted that society should purge itself of the "degenerate components." To Sharp, one way to purge was through a surgical solution; sterilization.

Sharp practiced his form of eugenics through his own surgical sterilization method, vasectomies. He conducted his first surgery on a prisoner, Clawson. Clawson fit Sharp's definition of a "degenerate" because Clawson would excessively masturbate. It is also important to note that Clawson fit the broad term of a “feeble-minded” person. As stated previously, “feeble-mindedness” encompassed a broad spectrum, including criminality and sexual deviancy. Clawson was a criminal who partook in supposed

[65] Ibid., 18.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., 19.

sexually deviant acts. This made Clawson an excellent candidate for sterilization since Sharp had learned in medical school that “feeble-minded” people committed these sexual actions. After the surgery Sharp reported that the vasectomy had "improved Clawson's health and cured his moral degeneracy."[68]

Sharp then had Clawson recruit other prisoners to undergo this surgery. It is unclear how many vasectomies Sharp performed before 1907 (when forced sterilizations became legal in Indiana). Between 1899 and 1909 Sharp reported he performed 456 of these sterilizations. Years later the numbers rose to 600 and he used this success to promote a nation-wide campaign for sterilizations, thus becoming the first "nationally successful advocate" for this medical procedure.[69]

Men like McCulloch, Jordan, and Sharp laid the foundation for these ideas to grow into a nationwide movement. They set the stage for court cases and laws to be passed that legalized this form of eugenics. While Dr. Sharp's patients supposedly volunteered for these surgeries, Sharp set a precedent by normalizing these procedures. In 1901 Sharp went to the Indiana Governor, Winfield T. Durbin, and petitioned him to encourage the Indiana state legislature to pass a compulsory sterilization law. He wanted to “prevent degenerates from passing on their condition.”[70] After six years of discussion and debate, the Indiana legislature passed the first ever sterilization law in the nation in 1907. Muscatatuck eventually used this eugenic tool.

[68] Ibid., 20.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.

Secondary Scholarship

Authors Steven Noll and James W. Trent Jr. in *Mental Retardation in America: A Historical Reader* evaluate who the "mentally ill" were in the late 1800s and 1900s. Beginning in the introduction, the authors examine the meaning of "idiot" and how language used to define the "mentally ill" has evolved throughout United States history. Noll and Trent Jr. state, "'Idiot' and other words that followed it- 'imbecile,' 'feebleminded,' 'morons,' 'defective,' 'deficient,' and 'retard'- represents sets of cultural meanings over time."[71] Here, this secondary source gives the history of language. One cannot write a thesis on the "feeble-minded" and "mentally ill" without explaining who was placed in these categories and how these categories and names changed throughout the twentieth century. This text brings credibility to my discussion of language before and during the national eugenics movement since Noll and Trent lay the foundation for how "feeble-mindedness" came to be by evaluating a common categorization used before this word gained popularity, "idiocy." Their discussion on what it meant for someone to be an "idiot" and the different levels allows me to connect how the term "idiocy" connected to the broader term "feeble-mindedness."

Paul A. Lombardo's *A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era,* is an excellent historiography of eugenics practiced in Indiana. Lombardo compiles the writings of current historians and scholars who specialize in the research and study of eugenics while also contributing his own writings and research. Through this text, Lombardo and his peers discuss some of the first laws that allowed forced sterilizations in Indiana, and even examine the demographics of

[71] Noll and Trent, *Mental Retardation in America*, 1.

those considered “mentally ill” or “feeble-minded” in the early-1900s.[72] They examine how sterilizations were connected to “moral hygiene,” Hoosiers who were involved in progressing sterilizations, how sterilizations in Indiana took place, and sterilization laws from 1907 to 1974. The authors link Muscatatuck to these sterilization procedures, and my analysis extends on this work by placing this eugenics-based medical procedure within the broader context of Muscatatuck’s existence during and after the eugenics movement.[73]

. Originally presented at the 2012 Social Science History Association, Lutz Kaelber’s website "Eugenics: Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States" provides an overview of how eugenics was practiced throughout the US.[74] Kaelber explains how “compulsory eugenics sterilization laws” came to be in the United States, noting the irony in how Germany is willing to come to terms with the horrors of their Nazi past and commemorate the wrong that was once done, whereas the United States is unwilling to acknowledge our dark past in eugenics. [75] This comparison is useful because it places our country’s eugenics movement into perspective. This source upholds that Americans accepted eugenics prior to and after the Nazi regime was in power.

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[72] Paul A. Lombardo, “Looking Back at Eugenics,” in *A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era*, ed. Paul A. Lombardo (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 1-11, 3.
[73] Alexandra Stern, “From Legislation to Lived Experience: Eugenic Sterilization in California and Indiana, 1907-70,” in *A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era*, ed. Paul A. Lombardo (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 95-117, 106-107.
[74] Lutz Kaelber, "Eugenics: Compulsory Sterilizations in 50 American States," The University of Vermont, 2011, accessed online on January 4, 2019 at: http://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/.
[75] Ibid.

Kaelber also provides to visitors to the site general statistics and numbers about people forcibly sterilized. People sterilized were anyone who was mentally ill or a part of a "disadvantaged group."[76] Based on old medical reports ranging from the early 1900s to the 1960s, Kaelber provides viewers with percentages of different groups of people (males, females, etc.) about who was forcibly sterilized in Indiana and what time period those sterilizations took place.

Alexandra Minna Stern's article, "We Cannot Make a Silk Purse Out of a Sow's Ear": Eugenics in the Hoosier Heartland," like Lombardo and his edited compiled book of secondary writings on eugenics in Indiana, provides a thorough discussion about Indiana involvement in the eugenics movement and compulsory sterilizations. She specifically focuses on analyzing Indiana in the eugenics movement from 1900 to 1960 to "situate Indiana on the national horizon."[77] Stern particularly examines Indiana's involvement in compulsory sterilizations and how Indiana's 1907 sterilization law created a domino effect that led to other states legalizing this invasive medical procedure. Most importantly, Stern examines who exactly was viewed as "unfit" or "fit" by eugenics standards during the movement.[78] Stern's writings also humanize the people subjected to compulsory sterilizations. In Lombardo's edited collection on eugenics in Indiana, Stern wrote a chapter titled, "From Legislation to Lived Experience: Eugenic Sterilization in California and Indiana, 1907-79." She outlines the story of two people, one in California

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[76] Ibid.
[77] Alexandra Minna Stern, "'We Cannot Make a Silk Purse Out of a Sow's Ear' Eugenics in the Hoosier Heartland," *Indiana Magazine of History*, (2007): 3-38, 7, accessed online on November 2, 2019 at: https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/imh/article/view/12254/18216.
[78] Ibid., 7.

and one in Indiana, who were sterilized against their will because they were "feeble-minded." She uses their stories to paint a picture about the kinds of people that often fell victim to these procedures due to their race, gender, and class.[79] My research is a continuation of Lombardo's and Stern's work in its overall goal to educate readers on Indiana's pivotal and leading role throughout the national eugenics movement. My unique contribution is to connect the policies these scholars discuss to the operations of a particular state institution.

[79] Stern, "From Legislation to Lived Experience," in *A Century of Eugenics in America,* ed. Lombardo, 96.

Moving Forward

Muscatatuck encompassed the multiple practices that defined Indiana's role in the eugenics movement. Its history shows the complexities and conflicts of how Hoosiers defined "feeble-mindedness" and the forms of treatment implemented throughout the twentieth century. Had there not been a eugenics movement which involved utilizing state institutions to segregate the "feeble-minded" from their communities, Muscatatuck would not have existed. The next two chapters detail how Muscatatuck came to exist and analyze the impact of Muscatatuck after its founding. In chapter one I argue that Muscatatuck was a byproduct of the national eugenics movement and played an integral part of the movement by examining commonly held eugenic beliefs and linking these ideologies to specific actions taken around the nation and state of Indiana. I mainly focus on how promoting segregation, instituting farm colonies, and debates about legalizing compulsory sterilizations led to Muscatatuck's founding. In chapter two I explore Muscatatuck Colony in practice, and how the institution's leaders and staff implemented policy changes and treatments as ideas of mental disability changed throughout the twentieth century.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the eugenic origins of Muscatatuck Colony and showcase Muscatatuck's evolution during and beyond this movement. To achieve this goal, I needed to access *the Indiana Bulletin of Charities and Corrections.* This was a quarterly publishing by the Indiana Board of State Charities meant to update public or private state institutions on various factors that might impact these organizations (public funding, improving care of inmates, improving social conditions, etc.). These documents show the ongoing discussions and progression of implementing

eugenic policies and methods. Hathi Trust Digital Library, a nonprofit site dedicated to digitizing historic documents and offering free access to the public, possesses most of these reports. I also utilized Muscatatuck's annual reports and the board of trustees' minutes from the Indiana State Archives. In addition, I used a source from the Indiana Historical Society's library and collections, Clifford Williams' *A History of Mental Hospitals in Indiana, w*hich provides a summary of Muscatatuck's founding.

It is important to note that due to recent legislation passed in Indiana regarding HIPAA, I could not access certain documents at the Indiana State Archives that pertained to the types of patients sterilized at Muscatatuck. For this reason, I relied heavily on Lombardo's compilation of the history of eugenics in Indiana since he utilizes a variety of writings from various American historians and Stern's writings since she examined first-hand compulsory sterilizations in Indiana. It should also be noted that toward the end of my research, the United States was hit with an international pandemic, COVID-19. This effected the final stage of my research with organizations shutting down for months. Therefore, I relied heavily on digitized and online sources to complete my research.

Chapter One: Eugenics on the Hoosier Front and Muscatatuck's Founding

The United States national eugenics movement played an integral role in Muscatatuck's existence. Ongoing debates, discussions, and research on how best to treat the "feeble-minded" population created a perceived need for Muscatatuck Colony's founding in 1920. The Indiana Board of State Charities and Corrections played a central role, and this organization recorded on-going discussions about how to handle the "feeble-minded problem." This was a state board, chaired by the Indiana governor, founded in 1890 and dissolved in the 1930s. The board was responsible for visiting all forms of state institutions (mental institutions, jails, etc.), investigating any changes that needed to be made, reporting on recommended directions these entities should take, and presenting this publication to the Indiana State Legislature through the Secretary of State. The board published some of these findings and recommendations in the *Indiana Bulletin*, and presented them annually at the National Conference of Charities and Corrections.[80] This chapter evaluates these sources to outline discussions and debates on eugenics and the "feeble-minded" community in Indiana during the early twentieth century, how these discussions converted to action, and how the result of these eugenic actions and debates led to Muscatatuck's founding.

The Indiana Board of State Charities and Corrections and eugenics leaders constantly discussed best practices and treatments to minimize this population of unwanted people, which motivated the expansion of the farm colony model, as well as the passage of the first ever compulsory sterilization law in Indiana in 1907. The

[80] The Board of State Charities, *The Indiana Bulletin of Charities and Corrections*, (Indianapolis: Hathi Trust, 1900), 1, accessed online on October 3, 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112100026134&view=1up&seq=7.

legalization of sterilizations in 1907, and subsequent local and national debates, set the stage for Muscatatuck Colony leadership performing this medical procedure on inmates of the institution in later decades. The results of these discussions and the execution of these eugenic practices also led to more “feeble-minded” people being housed in state institutions and the building of more facilities.

Segregation and Rehabilitation

By the early twentieth century eugenicists used segregation as a eugenic tool to separate the "feeble-minded" people from the rest of the population. Eugenicists believed that separating the "feeble-minded" from "normal" people helped purify society since they could re-locate all "tainted" people to concentrated spaces. This reduced the chances of them intermingling with their communities and reproducing more "feeble-minded" people. Through the history of the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth in Fort Wayne and the Board of State Charities and Corrections' evolving positions on segregation, we gain a better understanding about how institution leaders established farm colonies in some parts of Indiana to encourage the separation of "feeble-minded" people from the rest of their communities, while also giving them responsibilities and work to occupy their minds and hands. The influence of segregation, the effect of the first ever compulsory sterilization law, and the increased number of Hoosiers labeled "feeble-minded" led to the founding of Muscatatuck Colony in 1920.

Since its founding in 1890, the Indiana Board of State Charities and Corrections discussed the "feeble-minded" problem. In an address in 1901 by the Vice President and Chairman of Section H, Anthropology, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Amos W. Butler, Butler pulled from the nation's 1890 census when he said roughly 5,568 "feeble-minded" men and women resided in Indiana.[81] This was a "rough" number because census-takers went to local physicians to request an estimate of "feeble-minded" people they saw or treated and doctors did not have a

[81] The Board of State Charities, *The Indiana Bulletin of Charities and Corrections*, (Indianapolis: Hathi Trust, 1901), 17, accessed online on October 3, 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112100026050&view=1up&seq=2.

consistent method of tracking all the "feeble-minded" people.[82] He warned fellow scholars and eugenicists that they were everywhere and dispersed throughout society.

Butler warned readers that "feeble-minded" children with "stronger mental powers" had entered the public schools.[83] Butler, however, was not the only eugenicist who believed in segregating children based on their mental capabilities. Many eugenicists believed the children needed to be institutionalized and not allowed to intermingle with "ordinary" children. From 1900 to 1930 eugenicists placed emphasis on "science, classification, and human betterment," especially in public education.[84] Physicians even distributed IQ exams throughout the public school system to distinguish the "mentally inferior" children from the "ordinary" ones and by 1930 Terre Haute, Bloomington, and Shelbyville had regular mental exams for their students.[85] Like Butler, Hoosier eugenicist George Bliss supported identifying "feeble-minded" children from the public schools. He believed the "feeble-minded" children should be "segregated" and placed in different classrooms or placed in separate "suitable institutions" altogether.[86] Teachers, social workers, physicians, parents, and other community leaders helped identify "feeble-

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[82] John Koren, "Feeble-Minded in Institutions," *United States Census Bureau,* (1906): 205, accessed online on April 10, 2020 at: https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1904/dec/institutions-1904.html.
[83] The Board of State Charities, 1901, 17.
[84] Robert Osgood, "Education in the Name of 'Improvement': The Influence of Eugenic Thought and Practice in Indiana's Public Schools, 1900-1930," (Indiana Magazine of History, September 2010): 273
[85] Ibid., 287.
[86] Robert Osgood, "The Menace of the Feebleminded: George Bliss, Amos Butler, and the Indiana Committee on Mental Defectives," *Indiana Magazine of History,* (2001): 253-277, 260.

minded" children and once they categorized these children, they sent them to state institutions.[87]

In the *Indiana Bulletin,* Butler argued that "feeble-minded" men and women roamed the streets and interacted with the general public, which he stated was dangerous to society since the "feeble-minded" possessed "a peculiar tendency to immorality."[88] Butler placed emphasis on the population of "feeble-minded" women and how leaving these women alone would make them victims of their own "animal passions," that they had a harder time to control them and that they had stronger desires to fulfill these passions. "Feeble-minded" men, however, were more prone to violence and committing crimes.[89] Butler outlined the dangers of ignoring this problem. He asserted that if the state did not control the "feeble-minded" then this "mental illness" could spread, and if it spread, then more people would end up in poor houses, especially after he cited that all ninety-two of Indiana's poor houses had "feeble-minded" men, women, and children.[90] Butler argued that Indiana faced two evils: the growing population of "feeble-mindedness" through reproduction and the risk of children inheriting this from their parents.[91]

What should be done about the "feeble-minded problem"? Butler proposed that first, this group of people needed to be institutionalized and separated from society so that they could be properly educated. After all, Butler argued, that the "feeble-minded"

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[87] W.E. Fernald, "The Burden of Feeble-Mindedness," Library Collections: Document: Full Text, *Journal of Psycho-Asthenics*, (1913): accessed online on March 28, 2020 at: https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/lib/detail.html?id=1208.
[88] The Board of State Charities, 1901, 17.
[89] Ibid., 17-18.
[90] Ibid., 18.
[91] Ibid., 20.

were not "incapable of earning their own support."[92] Second, the "feeble-minded" men and women needed to be segregated by sex to avoid temptation of sexual immorality. Third, the "feeble-minded" men and women needed to be given labor and jobs to do as part of this rehabilitation. To Butler, if men and women learned skills, they could learn to live somewhat normal lives rather than land in poor houses.[93] It is in this context that Butler proposed more mental institutions follow a farm colony model. He praised a Fort Wayne institution, the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth, and how it helped solve the problem of "feeble-mindedness" through its segregation and labor methods for the inmates at Fort Wayne.[94] However, Butler believed more could be done and in 1901, he called for the following actions: that the general public learn about this social problem, that marriages among the "feeble-minded" be restricted, that "feeble-minded" children be properly educated, and that "feeble-minded" women have "custodial care" to prevent reproduction.[95] These discussions laid the groundwork for a specific form of segregation to take root – farm colonies.

[92] Ibid., 18.
[93] Ibid., 18-19.
[94] Ibid., 20.
[95] Ibid., 25.

Farm Colonies

In the U.S., farm colonies first rose in popularity in the late nineteenth century. However, their original purpose was not solely eugenics-inspired, rather, farming was viewed as a form of therapy for mental patients. Historian Sarah F. Rose delves into how farm colonies and manual labor became a form of rehabilitation in mental institutions in her book, *No Right to be Idle: The Invention of Disability, 1840s-1930s.* Other parts of the country used the farm colony format and manual labor before the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth in Fort Wayne existed. By the 1870s, charity reformers and educators believed that anyone who fell in the broad "feeble-minded" category needed to live some sort of productive life, as opposed to simply being locked away in an institution.[96] Hervey B. Wilbur of the New York Asylum for Idiots laid the foundation for teaching patients certain skill sets. In his institution, staff taught patients self-care, reading, writing, farm labor, and household skills.[97] Institutions with farm colonies believed that *some* patients could eventually be released back into society. Institution leadership aimed to return some patients to their rural families so that they could be "useful laborers" and assimilate better into their communities.[98]

Superintendent of the Rome State Custodial Asylum in New York, Charles Bernstein, promoted rehabilitation utilizing farm colonies during the time of the eugenics movement. His asylums, such as Rome, worked to rehabilitate and release "feeble-minded" girls back into society. To help achieve this goal, he used a farm colony model

[96] Sarah F. Rose, *No Right to Be Idle: the Invention of Disability, 1840s-1930s*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 14.
[97] Ibid., 14-15.
[98] Ibid., 15.

to train the women to be productive citizens and workers and also utilized a parole system.[99] He argued that "all able-bodied inmates" should have labor programs that improved them and made them productive members of society.[100] In 1904, Bernstein pushed for his own farm colony. By 1905, he opened a 150 acre farm and employed sixteen boys, all supervised by a farmer and his wife.[101] Farm colonies also financially supported themselves through having farm products to either sell or use to feed the inmates. Bernstein saved money through running a farm colony rather than an asylum because he utilized dairy products, produce, and meat from the farm. Bernstein "offered a striking model for how to integrate people labeled as "feeble-minded" and who lacked families into the wage workforce and the broader society."[102] While Bernstein's work helped the eugenics movement in his promotion of the segregation of "feeble-minded" people, he also held a more optimistic outlook than more traditional eugenicists in that he believed the patients could be rehabilitated and return to their homes over time.

Though some state institution leaders originally meant farm colonies to be used for rehabilitation, eugenicists adopted this model as a form of segregation. Some Indiana eugenicists believed that farm colonies could be used to segregate the "feeble-minded" while also giving them purpose. Various scholars have examined how eugenicists promoted the farm colony format. Geographer John P. Radford explains that, "the rise of farm colonies is seen [by the eugenicists] as epitomizing the expression of eugenic

[99] Ibid., 92.
[100] Ibid., 93.
[101] Ibid., 98.
[102] Ibid., 109.

ideologies in the social and physical landscapes."[103] In other words, Radford proposed that farm colonies' purpose was two-fold: to segregate people viewed less than average away from the rest of society and to create a community where the "feeble-minded" could live and work together on acres of land. The eugenic purpose behind farm colonies was that eugenicists viewed "feeble-minded" people as a drain on society. However, rather than placing them in state institutions where they remained "unproductive," farm colonies created a sort of community where the inmates were separated from society together and could serve more productive lives than if they were in other institutions such as poor houses or jails.

The Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth in Fort Wayne was one of Indiana's first farm colonies. This institution originally opened in 1879 in Knightstown, Indiana, and officially became a farm colony in 1893. Likewise, by 1907 other institutions like the Epileptic Farm also followed this farmer colony model for their patients. As more "feeble-minded" people were institutionalized in Indiana, less space became available for them in state institutions. The over-crowding would eventually lead to the Fort Wayne institution needing a sister establishment, Muscatatuck. However, before Muscatatuck's founding, another eugenic debate surfaced to accompany the segregation method, compulsory sterilizations.

Discussions about compulsory sterilizations which targeted institutionalized people began in the early twentieth century among physicians and eugenicists in Indiana. Dr. Sharp's experimental sterilizations on prisoners (discussed in the introduction) and

[103] John P. Radford, "Sterilization versus Segregation: Control of the 'Feebleminded', 1900–1938," *Social Science & Medicine* 33, no. 4 (1991): 449.

his petition to the Indiana State Legislature led to the first ever sterilization law in the United States being passed in Indiana and signed by Governor Frank Hanly (1905-1909) on March 9, 1907. While segregation was the primary eugenic tool, sterilization went even farther to prevent people from reproducing and multiplying the "feeble-minded" community. Indiana set precedent by legalizing this medical procedure for the first time in the United States' history, and by 1917, fourteen other states legalized compulsory sterilizations.[104] Under this law inmates such as "rapists," "imbeciles," or people deemed mentally ill could be examined by surgeons. If the surgeons, through the council of the institution's physicians and board of managers, deemed it necessary then it would "be lawful for the surgeons to perform such operation for the prevention of procreation as shall be decided safest and most effective."[105] The law provided physicians with the freedom to perform sterilizations and prevent people they deemed unfit from reproducing, or to stop them from reproducing any further.

In 1907, the same year the first ever sterilization law passed, Butler once again wrote about decreasing the "feeble-minded" population. He argued, first, that marriage laws must be "broadened and strengthened" to minimize the "feeble-minded problem" and to purify the population.[106] Butler believed the "feeble-minded" should be denied

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[104] Stanley P. Davies, *Social Control of the Feebleminded: A Study of Social Programs and Attitudes in Relation to the Problems of Mental Deficiency,* (Utica: State Hospital Press, Hathi Trust, 1923), 61, accessed online on April, 10 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015063049681;view=1up;seq=13.
[105] Indiana General Assembly, "1907 General Acts: Indiana General Assembly," (Indiana State Library, W.B. Burford, 1907), accessed online on June 22, 2020 at: http://ulib.iupuidigital.org/cdm/ref/collection/Eugenics/id/1526.
[106] The Board of State Charities, *Indiana Bulletin of Charities and Corrections,* (Indianapolis: Hathi Trust, 1908), 294, accessed online on October 3, 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112100026043&view=1up&seq=7.

marriage and that there should be more discussion on opening more state institutions to segregate them from the general public. Due to the Indiana legislature legalizing sterilizations, Butler also called for institution leaders to consider sterilizing some of the inmates of their institutions.[107]

Despite the passage of the 1907 compulsory sterilization law, sterilizations were controversial to Indiana citizens and political leaders. In 1909 the newly elected governor, Thomas Marshall, did not approve of this law. To discourage state institutions from utilizing it, he threatened to pull funding.[108] Though the Indiana legislature legalized this medical procedure and the Indiana Supreme Court did not repeal it until 1921, political figures like Marshall limited these procedures by strong-arming state institutions.

The unpopularity of this law grew, as can be seen in a 1912 report from a member of the Board of Trustees at the School for Feeble-Minded Youth, J. W. Sale. Sale argued that they needed a second institution to serve as an extension of the Fort Wayne School if, "the State is to undertake the segregation of the entire defective population."[109] Sale proposed that they had the option to sterilize patients which would allow them to release these patients back into their communities since the risk of them reproducing no longer existed. However, this option was "not very popular."[110] Sale wanted to see more emphasis placed on institutionalizing the "mentally defective" before they considered

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[107] Ibid., 3.
[108] Lutz Kaelber, "Eugenics/Eugenic Sterilizations in Indiana."
[109] The Board of State Charities, *The Indiana Bulletin of Charities and Corrections,* (Indianapolis: Hathi Trust, 1912), 196, accessed online on October 3, 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112100026035&view=1up&seq=2.
[110] Ibid., 196.

sterilizations. He understood that the public was uncomfortable with normalizing such an invasive and permanent medical procedure. Overall, this shows that some institution leaders wanted to be cautious before implementing consistent sterilization procedures.

By 1912, the Indiana Board of Charities and Corrections continued to view "feeble-mindedness" as a growing problem in the state. Eugenicists persistently stereotyped "feeble-minded" Hoosier women as sexual deviants, especially when they thought women had, "a tendency to sexual perversion" and that these women in general were "sources of debauchery" which "polluted" the thoughts of men, especially "feeble-minded" boys and men.[111] Likewise, criminality and degeneracy were increasing according to this report. The Board believed there was once again one answer to this social problem: segregation.[112] In fact, they argued that "if all of the mental defectives in Indiana could be gathered together tomorrow and placed under the permanent care and detention of the State…feeble-mindedness could be practically stamped out within a generation; the criminal class would be reduced, arson, incest, illegitimacy, costs of criminal prosecutions and care of criminals would be lessened and eventually a great economic saving would be accomplished."[113] Fort Wayne, however, had limited space. This argument, combined with the need for more space, eventually encouraged Indiana leaders to establish Muscatatuck in 1920 to institutionalize more "feeble-minded" people.

Other eugenicists continued to have visions of Fort Wayne's "feeble-minded" colony expansion and segregation plan. In a 1916, "Editorial" from the *Journal of Psycho-Asthenics,* Dr. George Bliss provided his perspective of eugenics and his vision

[111] Ibid., 193-194,
[112] Ibid., 194.
[113] Ibid.

for the future, specifically for the Fort Wayne state institution in Indiana. He explained how Indiana Governor Ralston appointed a committee through the Board of State Charities and Corrections to, "consider the problem of mental defectiveness throughout Indiana to determine, if possible, how many there are in Indiana."[114] Dr. Bliss also acknowledged that once they had a better understanding of the "feeble-minded" and/or people with epilepsy, then a plan would be drawn to figure out the best treatments in Indiana. These studies reinforced the construction of a sister institution to Fort Wayne in southern Indiana.

An accumulation of eugenic thoughts on "feeble-mindedness," how to control this population, and the need for more room to segregate this population, led to Muscatatuck's presence. Continuous discussions within the *Indiana Bulletin* about segregating the "feeble-minded" away from the rest of society during the national eugenics movement took place since 1901. By the 1910s pressure increased for another institution to catch the overflow of inmates from Fort Wayne since so many "feeble-minded" people had been institutionalized. By 1916, just four years before Muscatatuck's founding, the Indiana Board of State Charities and Corrections reported that "feeble-mindedness" reached a peak of about 20,000 "feeble-minded" people, 1,350 of those people belonged to the Fort Wayne institution.[115] The Board of State Charities and Corrections praised the work Fort Wayne did and the benefits that the farm colony plan brought because it allowed women to have "healthful occupations" and boys to "engage

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[114] Kuhlmann, Mastin, Byers, Bliss, Ochsner, McCallie, MacMurchy, Fernald, Anderson, Wallace, and Fitts, *Journal of Psycho-Asthenics*, 113.
[115] Board of State Charities, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the Board of State Charities of Indiana*, (Indianapolis: Hathi Trust, 1916), 116, accessed online on October 3, 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hl467v&view=1up&seq=1.

in the activities of farm life."[116] This report called for a new farm colony that resembled the Fort Wayne institution to be established. The report explained that, "the great need is for another colony to which children trained to the limit of their capacity can be transferred…in the southern part of the state should be acquired for this purpose…"[117] The Board of State Charities and Corrections asserted that if they built another farm colony this would greatly help the Fort Wayne institution and allow more space for the "feeble-minded" in Indiana. "To the limit of their capacity" also indicates that Muscatatuck's founding originally stemmed from this idea that people at Muscatatuck had permanent mental limitations. Therefore, the Board called for this institution where the "feeble-minded" could live more productive lives away from their communities, than they could on their own.

Indiana leaders formed Muscatatuck because of concerns about overcrowding at Fort Wayne. The Board petitioned for an institution in southern Indiana to help the other mental hospitals since "the problem of the mental defective" caused "financial burdens and is increasing with importance and weight every year…"[118] In response to this growing problem, the Board of Charities finally passed a resolution on April 22, 1915, to select an eight person committee to oversee the founding of a new state institution, which would eventually be Muscatatuck. The resolution ordered that the committee consist of two members from the legislature (one of them a Senator) and that the rest of the members be people, "who have given special attention to the subject in some of its

[116] Ibid., 117.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Clifford L. Williams, *A History of Mental Hospitals in Indiana* (Indiana Historical Society, 195-), 92.

phases."[119] The following committee was appointed on August 6, 1915: Rev. Francis H. Gavisk (Chairman), Dr. George F. Edenharter, Dr. Samuel E. Smith, Dr. Charles P. Emerson, Dr. W. C. VanNuys, Dr. George S. Pliss, Senator D. Frank Culbertson, and Representative Charles A. McGonagle.[120]

On April 24, 1917, Indiana Governor Goodrich appointed this same committee to study counties in Indiana for potential expansion. In one of their reports, the committee argued that they needed another institution and that the "feeble-minded" community was "increasing twice as rapidly in proportion as is the normal-minded population."[121] The committee's observation led to the following recommendation:

> "We recommend immediate additional provisions be made for the urgent cases in farm colonies, where their work under supervision can be utilized, thus providing for the care of the feeble-minded at the lowest possible cost. We recommend the immediate establishment of a colony in the southern part of the State, with 1,000 to 2,000 acres of land."[122]

This committee proposal inspired the Indiana General Assembly to pass a law in Chapter 94 of the Acts of 1919 which granted permission for the Indiana Farmer's Colony for the Feeble-Minded (Muscatatuck) to be founded. Governor Goodrich appointed a commission to create this institution: J.E. Green from Muncie, C. E. Talkington from Greencastle, Charles A. McGonagle from Plainfield, and W. S. Margowski from Delphi.[123] Before Muscatatuck opened, the commission traveled to the Indiana School for the Feeble-Minded Youth at Fort Wayne, the Indiana Village for the Epileptics at New Castle, and even Waverly and Templeton in Massachusetts to see how

[119] Ibid., 93.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid., 94.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.

farm colonies functioned in different states.[124] The purpose of Muscatatuck was to fulfill, "the duty of the state to provide proper care for such of its citizens as are feeble-minded, and are therefore unable properly to care for themselves."[125] Since the commission actively visited and researched other mental institutions before Muscatatuck formed, the institution's design encompassed eugenic practices implemented not only in Indiana, but in other parts of the country.

By 1921, just a year after Muscatatuck's founding, the Indiana Supreme Court repealed the 1907 compulsory sterilization law through the *William v. Smith* case. On May 11, 1921, an inmate at the Indiana Reformatory, Warren Wallace Smith, had petitioned against his own sterilization. The board members at his institution defended the 1907 Sterilization Act under section 215 which stated that the institution managers were "intrusted with the care of defectives and confirmed criminals and a committee of experts to perform an operation of vasectomy on an inmate, it is deemed advisable, to prevent procreation…"[126] Smith, however, argued that this went against his right of due process and that he did not meet the requirements of someone who should be forcibly sterilized. The court ruled in his favor. It stated that, "this operation shall not be performed except in cases that have been pronounced unimprovable."[127] This meant that if the inmate had the ability to improve himself then he did not need to be sterilized.

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[124] Ibid., 95.
[125] Indiana, *Laws of the State of Indiana, Passed at the Seventy-First Regular Session of the General Assembly* (J. P. Chapman, 1919), 480, accessed online on April 13, 2019 at: https://goo.gl/4SJ6hV.
[126] *Williams v. Smith,* (Supreme Court of Indiana, May 11, 1921): 2, accessed online on June 11, 2019 at: https://www.iupui.edu/~eugenics/SMith%20vs%20Williams.pdf.
[127] Ibid., 2.

Since the Indiana legislature repealed the 1907 sterilization law in 1921, this changed what happened at Muscatatuck, then called the Indiana Farmer Colony for the Feeble-Minded, for the first six years of Muscatatuck's life (1920-1926). Muscatatuck leadership did not discuss sterilizing their inmates because by 1921 it was illegal. Instead, for these first few years, Muscatatuck was primarily used as a place to send "feeble-minded" young men (teenagers and older) to live together away from their communities, while also doing farm labor. As stated earlier in this chapter, various eugenicists did not believe "feeble-minded" people could be fully rehabilitated, but they could still live a somewhat productive life on a farm colony.[128]

Lutz Kaelber, Associate Professor at the University of Vermont, argues that the Indiana Governor of the time, James Goodrich, even used *William v. Smith* as a humanitarian push to prove to the legislature that this law was "cruel and unusual punishment" and that it violated American citizens' fourteenth Amendment right of due process.[129] However, despite the fact that the Indiana Supreme Court repealed the 1907 sterilization law after the *Williams v. Smith* case, a new sterilization law passed the state legislature in 1927. The passage of this law was made possible by an infamous case that arose from Virginia, *Buck v. Bell.* Muscatatuck leadership ultimately took advantage of Indiana's 1927 sterilization law to have their own patients sterilized.

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[128] The Board of the Trustees for the Indiana Farm Colony for the Feeble-Minded, *First Annual Report of the Indiana Farm Colony for the Feeble-Minded,* Hathi Trust, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, 1920), 4-5, accessed online on July 14, 2019 at: https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015065656954&view=1up&seq=3.

[129] Lutz Kaelber, "Eugenics/Eugenic Sterilizations in Indiana."

Chapter Two: Muscatatuck Colony

Once Muscatatuck came into existence as part of the national eugenics movement, key administration and staff of Muscatatuck Colony shaped the institution's practices. Several leaders of the facility from the 1930s through the 1970s, within the context of fluctuating mid-century notions about people with mental disabilities, initiated changes in management and operations. While Muscatatuck's founding was a part of an attempt to segregate and eliminate Indiana's "feeble-minded" population, the institution persisted for generations. Its mission even changed as ideas of intellectual disability evolved over the course of the twentieth century.

Muscatatuck leaders implemented four changes throughout its existence in the early-to-mid-twentieth century. First, Muscatatuck leaders used compulsory sterilizations as a form of population control within the institution from the 1930s through the 1950s. Second, Muscatatuck Colony leaders broke the facility away from its sister institution in Fort Wayne in the 1930s to execute institutional changes more freely, such as expanding the campus. Third, leaders gradually transitioned away from the farm colony model and embraced more education-based programs by the 1940s and 1950s. Fourth, Muscatatuck researcher Dr. William Culley discovered a preventative screening procedure to detect "mental deficiency" or, "mental retardation" in the mid-1960s. These four aspects all work together to demonstrate that while Muscatatuck was originally founded on eugenics principles, the institution's mission, and methods to treat patients evolved and led to Muscatatuck surviving long after the national eugenics movement concluded.

Muscatatuck and Compulsory Sterilizations

The infamous court case, *Buck v. Bell*, changed the tide for Indiana and sterilizations, especially since the Indiana Supreme Court had recently repealed the state's sterilization law in 1921. On May 2, 1927, in the state of Virginia, Carrie Buck brought her sterilization case to the United State Supreme Court. Physicians diagnosed her as a "feeble-minded" woman due to her "promiscuity" for birthing a child out of wedlock, even though she conceived the child through rape. She stated that what the surgeons had done was "cruel and unusual punishment," the same argument Warren Smith of Indiana had used in 1921.[130] The judges ruled against Buck in an eight to one vote. They argued that she did not experience "cruel and unusual punishment" since the procedure did not involve torture like "drawing and quartering the culprit, burning at the stake, cutting off the nose, ears or limbs…"[131] The court also justified the defendant's forced sterilization through using her "mental state" against her. Since she was "feeble-minded," the State had a right to make decisions for her.[132] Ultimately, the judge's final ruling stated, "The statute then enacts that whenever the superintendent of certain institutions including the above named State Colony shall be of opinion that it is for the best interests of the patients and of society that an inmate under his care should be sexually sterilized, he may have the operation performed upon any patient afflicted with

[130] Judge Oliver Wendell Holmes and the Supreme Court of the United States, "U.S. Reports: *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 200," (Library of Congress: 1926): 203, accessed online on January 4, 2019 at: https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep274200/.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid., 204.

hereditary forms of insanity, imbecility, and idiocy on complying with the very careful provisions by which the act protects the patients from possible abuse.[133]

The Supreme Court Case set precedent for states like Indiana to re-legalize compulsory sterilizations. As scholars Jason Lantzer and Alexandra Stern assert "the resurgence of eugenic sterilization in Indiana could not have taken place without one of the most famous and infamous U.S. Supreme Court decisions, *Buck v. Bell."*[134] *Buck v. Bell* inspired Indiana to revive the use of this medical procedure in state institutions, including the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth in Fort Wayne and the Muscatatuck Colony. [135]

In 1927 the Indiana State Legislature passed a new compulsory sterilization law, and in 1931 the Indiana General Assembly passed an extension of the 1927 sterilization law. Under the 1927 legislation, the superintendent of the institution determined who he thought should be sterilized and petitioned the institution's board of trustees who conducted their own hearings. If a relative or superintendent disagreed with the ruling, they could petition the local county courts. The 1931 extension sterilization law, however, was meant to "empower" county judges with the assistance of two physicians, "to order the sterilization of the feebleminded and insane during their commitment procedure."[136] In place of a hearing by the institution's board to rule if an inmate should be sterilized, now, county judges took part in the process.

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[133] Ibid., 205-206.
[134] Jason S. Lantzer and Alexandra Minna Stern, "Building a Fit Society: Indiana's Eugenics Crusaders," *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History*, (2007): 11.
[135] Lantzer and Stern, "Building a Fit Society," 11.
[136] Lutz Kaelber, "Eugenics/Eugenic Sterilizations in Indiana."

In part, the Indiana General Assembly successfully passed a "revamped" version of the 1907 law because by this time they knew what terminology to avoid and what the "pitfalls" of the first sterilization law had been.[137] Compared to the 1907 legislation, which allowed for the sterilization of criminals, the 1927 sterilization law limited the groups of people who could be sterilized to the "insane, feeble-minded, or epileptic."[138] The new law excluded criminals from compulsory sterilizations since criminals had successfully challenged the procedure in court. Therefore, people susceptible to forcible sterilization now primarily resided in mental institutions, including Muscatatuck Colony. According to Stern, the passage of the 1927 sterilization law and its extension in 1931 led to the forced sterilization of over 2,000 Hoosiers by the 1970s.[139]

After the *William v. Smith* Indiana Supreme Court case, women were now more likely to be targeted for forced sterilizations.[140] In their book, *Fit to be Tied: Sterilization and Reproductive Rights in America, 1950-1980,* historians Rebecca Kluchin and Janet Golden explain how eugenicists sterilized men and women for different reasons nation-wide. For men, it was to "punish their criminal behavior and treat their aggression." For women, it was to continue controlling their sexuality.[141] Eugenicists blamed women for reproducing "defective" humans.[142] After all, women gave birth to these humans. Therefore, physicians believed it made more sense to sterilize women as opposed to men.

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[137]Stern, "'We Cannot Make a Silk Purse," 13.
[138] Lutz Kaelber, "Eugenics/Eugenic Sterilizations in Indiana."
[139] Stern, "'We Cannot Make a Silk Purse," 7.
[140] *William v. Smith* case explained in chapter one.
[141] Rebecca M. Kluchin, *Fit to Be Tied: Sterilization and Reproductive Rights in America, 1950-1980,* Critical Issues in Health and Medicine (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 17.
[142] Ibid.

Kluchin states "…eugenicists instead redoubled their efforts to sterilize 'delinquent' women. This reinforced and reflected their association of transmission of 'defective' genetic material with women far more than men."[143]

William v. Smith triggered an increase in female sterilizations throughout the United States. Kluchin even explains how the 1930s saw a drastic increase in female sterilizations and a decrease in male sterilizations.[144] Between 1907 and 1928 around forty-two percent of people sterilized were women. However, "the number of female sterilizations soon over-took those of male sterilizations as the 'girl problem' grew…"[145] Therefore, from 1920 to 1940 the percentage of women sterilized increased to fifty-eight percent and by 1961 (toward the end of compulsory sterilizations and the eugenics movement), sixty-one percent of Americans sterilized nationwide were women.[146]

While sterilization took place in Indiana and other parts of the nation since the early 1900s, it appears that Muscatatuck Colony inmates were not sterilized until the 1930s. However, discussions of sterilizing Muscatatuck inmates began toward the end of the 1920s. The 1929 annual report for the Indiana Farmer Colony for the Feeble-Minded first raised the option of sterilizing inmates at Muscatatuck. Assistant superintendent William T. Riley argued that sterilizations would benefit the inmates and asserted, "I would also recommend that a law be passed requiring all inmates to be sterilized. In my judgement this would be better for the inmates and the public in general."[147] Riley

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[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid., 17-18.
[145] Ibid., 17.
[146] Ibid.
[147] The Board of the Trustees for the Indiana Farm Colony for the Feeble-Minded, *Tenth Annual Report of the Indiana Farmer Colony for the Feeble Minded,* Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, 1929), 47-48.

wanted this to be mandatory for any "feeble-minded" person institutionalized at Muscatatuck. Once physicians sterilized these inmates it took away the possibility of them ever reproducing and multiplying the "feeble-minded" population.

This push to sterilize patients in institutions like Muscatatuck especially grew in the 1930s when the Great Depression began. The economic crisis caused state institution leadership to enact what were called furlough programs. Furlough programs allowed an inmate or patient to be released from their state institution and return home. While they were home, a social worker from the state institution conducted home visits to make sure the inmate or patient was appropriately re-assimilating back into their communities. The idea behind these furlough programs was to prevent overcrowding and limit costs.[148] State institution leaders designed furlough programs to allow "recovered or improved mental patients" to return to his or her community.[149] Sterilizations went hand-in-hand with these programs because the threat of the person reproducing when they returned was no longer a possibility.

By the late 1930s and early 1940s, consistently executing the furlough program proved to be a challenge. In a mental hygiene report by the Indiana Department of Public Welfare (1940), director of the Division of Medical Care, George C. Stevens, outlined the difficulties Indiana had with implementing state-wide institutional furlough programs. Stevens reported that, when it came to releasing a patient, "the question inevitably comes up as to whether the situation which was responsible for the previous break still exists,

[148] Stern, "'We Cannot Make a Silk Purse," 31-31.
[149] George C. Stevens, *Mental Hygiene in Indiana* (Indianapolis: Indiana Department of Welfare, 1940), 39, accessed online on April 10, 2020 at: https://collections.nlm.nih.gov/ext/dw/43030200R/PDF/43030200R.pdf.

and if it does, how much such situation will contribute to the retardation of his recovery or possible recurrence of the mental illness."[150] It was difficult for men like Stevens to tell whether placing patients on furlough would help them or make their mental state worse.

Stevens did, however, acknowledge the problem of overpopulation in mental institutions throughout Indiana. He argued that a more "efficient furlough system" was essential and for that to happen, "some liaison between the new environment [place where patient was sent home] and the institution had to be developed."[151] At this time each institution had a social worker. They investigated the community to which the patients would return and maintained check-ups to help the patient "adjust" to life outside of the mental institutions. Stevens concluded that Indiana needed a strategy "to effect more rapid turnover of the patient population."[152]

Muscatatuck social worker, Gertrude K. Fenger, proposed a plan for improving Indiana's furlough program in her report from the 1941 Twenty-Second Annual Report of the Muscatatuck State School. At this time Muscatatuck had some patients sterilized. In fact, records of inmates being sterilized started showing up in the Board Meeting Minutes as early as 1937.[153] However, Fenger believed that more patients needed this medical procedure to help the over-crowding problem. Fenger argued, "The furlough program could have been more effective if a sterilization program had been in force in this institution. A number of boys and girls could probably have assumed a place in their

[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid., 40.
[152] Ibid.
[153] The Board of the Trustees for Muscatatuck Colony for the Feeble-Minded, *Minutes*, Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville, IN: 1937-1953), 7, 14 and 20.

communities if they had been sterilized."[154] Fenger believed that more needed to be done than having a few patients sterilized here and there. If physicians sterilized more people, this would prevent the growth of the "feeble-minded" community. To Fenger, this procedure went together with Muscatatuck Colony's furlough program.

Muscatatuck was not the first institution in Indiana to use sterilizations to regulate their population. Muscatatuck Colony's old sister institution in Fort Wayne also implemented this method. Stern provides a specific case involving a twenty-eight year old female inmate at what used to be called the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth, and was now called the Fort Wayne State School in May of 1943.[155] At the school's monthly board of trustees meeting, the trustees interviewed a woman they thought should be sterilized. The board considered if they should grant the female inmate's furlough on the condition she would be sterilized before her release. The conversation was as follows:

> Q: Do you want that operation performed?
> A: No.
> Q: Do you want to go home?
> A: Yes.
> Q: Would you like to have this operation so you can go home?
> A: Yes, I'll take anything to get home.[156]

The Fort Wayne State School was responsible for most of Indiana's compulsory sterilizations until the 1970s. However, Muscatatuck Colony leadership still used this procedure, too. Many sterilized Muscatatuck inmates went on furlough, including in 1940

[154] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck State School, *Twenty-Second Annual Report of the Muscatatuck State School*, Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, June 30, 1941), 19.
[155] Stern, "'We Cannot Make a Silk Purse," 27
[156] Ibid.

when two inmates had been sterilized and released back into their communities.[157] Stern states that from 1937 to 1953 the Muscatatuck Board of Trustees approved 144 sterilization orders.[158] Likewise, by the end of state-mandated sterilizations in Indiana in 1974, Stern shows that in total, physicians sterilized 500 mental patients and inmates in Indiana from the Muscatatuck Colony.[159]

Overall, compulsory sterilizations began in the United Sates as a eugenic tool to prevent certain members of society from reproducing. However, this compulsory medical procedure also became a tactic for institutional management. This is especially evident through conversations Muscatatuck staff and leadership had about sterilizing more inmates to place on furlough due to limited space. Muscatatuck's role in compulsory sterilizations also reveals how Muscatatuck leadership's thoughts on this medical procedure shifted over time. To Muscatatuck employees, sterilization was more than just a eugenic tool, it was an institutional one as well.

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[157] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck Colony, *Twenty-First Annual Report of the Muscatatuck Colony*, Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, June 30, 1940), 28.
[158] Stern, "We Cannot Make a Silk Purse," 28, footnote 86.
[159] Stern, "From Legislation to Lived Experience," in *A Century of Eugenics in America*, ed. Lombardo, 99, 106-107.

Muscatatuck Colony's Break-away and Growth

Until 1937 Muscatatuck served as a sister colony of the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth in Fort Wayne (later called the Fort Wayne State School). This meant that Muscatatuck Colony answered to the same board as its sister institution. Both institutions struggled to share resources, which is especially evident in their joint annual reports. In the tenth annual report for the Indiana Farmer Colony for the Feeble-Minded (which was renamed the Muscatatuck Colony in 1929), Assistant Superintendent William T. Riley expressed his frustrations about the obstacles they faced. He explained that the institution had reached capacity and that they desperately needed more buildings to house the growing number of inmates.

For the next few years Riley reported in Muscatatuck's annual reports to the board the continuous problems of overcrowding and limited space at Muscatatuck. In 1931 he reported overcrowding in dormitories and stated they planned to add a new dormitory toward the end of the year.[160] In the 1933 annual report Riley recorded his fears about Muscatatuck's ill-preparedness for emergencies. He even stated, "If special attention is required, which we are not equipped to furnish, or if any emergency arises the patient is transferred to the hospital of the Fort Wayne School."[161] Muscatatuck Colony only had a tiny hospital and limited medical supplies which made Muscatatuck reliant on its sister institution and its medical resources.

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[160] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck Colony, *Twelfth Annual Report of the Muscatatuck Colony,* Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, September 30, 1931), 50.
[161] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck Colony, *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Muscatatuck Colony*, Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, June 30, 1933), 38.

In June 1935, Riley petitioned the board for funds for the construction of a new hospital and other necessary additions at Muscatatuck. Riley argued that Muscatatuck needed the following to function: "a new, completely equipped hospital," a recreational building, more dormitory space, dwelling for the assistant superintendent (a fire destroyed the old one in the previous year), a modern horse barn, proper storage for grains, seeds, feeds, and vegetables, new boiler, sidewalks, and "provisions for proper handling of milk."[162] Ultimately Riley's successor, D.L. McCauley, would decide that Muscatatuck could not continue serving as an extension of the Indiana School for Feeble-Minded Youth if the board they shared continued to neglect their needs.

In June of 1937, in the seventeenth annual report of Muscatatuck Colony, McCauley, the new superintendent, requested a separation from Fort Wayne. He stated, "It is with regret I consider the separation of this institution from the Fort Wayne State School. . .the two institutions have been able to cooperate so completely and our relations have been so agreeable that one wonders if the same pleasant and efficient service can be provided in the future."[163] If the board for the Muscatatuck and Fort Wayne institutions agreed to this separation, a law would be passed by the Indiana General Assembly officially and legally labeling these institutions as independent from each other. For Muscatatuck leadership this meant their own board, which would make institutional change easier to implement than before.

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[162] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck Colony, *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Muscatatuck Colony,* Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, June 30, 1935), 54.
[163] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck Colony, *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Muscatatuck Colony*, Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, June 30, 1937), 61.

The nineteenth annual report for Muscatatuck Colony (1938) showed a drastic change for the institution. This was the first time Muscatatuck leadership published the annual report in their own booklet rather than as part of the Fort Wayne institution's annual report booklet. The report explained that by the Act of the General Assembly of 1937, "the institution was separated from the Fort Wayne State School, effective as of July 1, 1937, and an appropriation set up for the improvement of the then existing institution or for the establishment of an entirely new institution within a radius of fifty miles of the present site."[164] This change gave Muscatatuck leadership more freedom to expand and establish buildings and other resources they needed. The superintendent did not miss a beat and reported in 1938 that Muscatatuck added two dormitories, a power plant, and fully furnished a hospital.[165]

[164] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck Colony, *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Muscatatuck Colony*, Indiana State Archives, (Butlerville: The Office of the Board of Public Printing, June 30, 1938), 4.
[165] Ibid., 6.

Muscatatuck's Advancement

The breakaway from the sister institution in Fort Wayne not only gave Muscatatuck leadership more control over institutional changes, it coincided with Muscatatuck's shifting role in mental health as it updated its programs for the "feeble-minded."[166]

By 1940 the colony established a school for child-patients along with hiring an education director, Robert M. Hughes.[167] Hughes shared his insights on this new educational initiative when he said, "Muscatatuck Colony cared only for adult custodial cases but at that time a group of younger children transferred to Muscatatuck Colony from Fort Wayne State School and during the summer these children had been observed, examined and classified so that a group of 106 children had been selected as capable of attending school."[168] Children arriving at Muscatatuck pushed institution leaders to implement new and more up-to-date programs to keep the children busy with productive pastimes, including a school since it was mandatory to provide education to institutionalized children. As the colony continued to turn away from the farm model, the institution's leadership implemented more programs. For the school, Muscatatuck leaders created a sixteen-piece orchestra to keep the children busy. Though funding was limited, and these instruments were mainly bazookas, harmonicas, toy drums, jugs, and washboards, the facilitation of this program reveals that Muscatatuck leadership transitioned more toward educational experiences for patients.

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[166] Stevens, *Mental Hygiene in Indiana*, 63.
[167] The Board of the Trustees for the Muscatatuck Colony, *Twenty-First Annual Report of the Muscatatuck Colony*, 24-26.
[168] Ibid., 24.

By 1940 Muscatatuck also had twenty-four new buildings and Muscatatuck leadership no longer labeled the residents as "inmates" but rather "patients." The main reason for this linguistic change was that Muscatatuck leadership decided to make this institution more program-based and less custodial. [169] This is especially evident after leadership changed the institution's name from Muscatatuck Colony to the Muscatatuck State School in 1941.[170]

The 1950s brought more institutional change to Muscatatuck. By this time, Muscatatuck housed over 2,100 patients of all ages, both men and women.[171] In 1952, Muscatatuck, for the first time in its history, allowed children six and younger to be admitted.[172] To accommodate this age-range, leadership had a nursery constructed that year. Likewise, by the late 1950s, physicians no longer referred to people with intellectual disabilities as "feebleminded" but as "mentally retarded."[173] The American Association on Mental Deficiency's publishing of the 1959 fifth manual on classification and terminology of mental defectiveness sparked this name change. The Association re-named "mental deficiency" (which the broad category "feeble-mindedness" fell under), to "mental retardation."[174] Different sub-categories existed that defined a "mentally

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[169] Stevens, *Mental Hygiene in Indiana*, 63.
[170] No clear explanation was provided in Muscatatuck's annual reports on why they called their residents "patients" instead of "students" by 1940. Though it was called a school, Muscatatuck was more than a school. It offered medical care and attention to people with disabilities. A combination of minors having access to schooling and every patient having access to medical care and surveillance more than likely is the reason Muscatatuck staff referred to them in general as "patients."
[171] The Muscatatuck State Hospital and Training Center Administration Staff, *History Binder: Muscatatuck Memories*, (Butlerville: Muscatatuck Museum, 2005).
[172] Ibid.
[173] Michael L. Wehmeyer, *The Story of Intellectual Disability: An Evolution of Meaning, Understanding, and Public Perception* (Baltimore: Brookes Publishing, 2013), 167.
[174] Ibid.

retarded person." This included mental impairments in the following areas: maturation [sexual maturing], cognitive learning, and social adjustments.[175] Muscatatuck staff now referred to their patients as "mentally retarded" rather than "feeble-minded." This change in language and its meaning also placed emphasis on "adaptive behavior," which meant that if in these three areas a "mentally retarded" person fell short, they had a chance to "adapt" and learn. This change explains why Muscatatuck continued to focus on creating more programs to help patients with their adaptive behavioral development. As each year passed, Muscatatuck leadership worked more toward creating a community and left the old farm colony method behind them.

Muscatatuck physicians also engaged in groundbreaking explorations about the nature of "mental retardation" research that suggested this condition could be detected, prevented, and even cured. This research led to the creation of a new diagnostic test conceived on Muscatatuck property by Doctor William J. Culley, Director of the Mental Retardation Research Laboratory at Muscatatuck. Dr. Culley's new diagnostic test put Muscatatuck Colony on the forefront of altering the perspective of how to treat "retarded" people. The *Indianapolis Star* reported that Culley and other biochemists at Muscatatuck had worked to develop a test "to detect eight of the 30 known abnormalities in body chemistry that cause mental retardation."[176] Marion County General hospital first used it to test newborn infants.[177]

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[175] Ibid.
[176] "Biochemists Develop Test for Retardation," *The Indianapolis Star* (Indianapolis, IN), Oct. 28, 1965, 17, accessed online on April 15, 2020 at: https://www.newspapers.com/clip/29459082/the-indianapolis-star/.
[177] Ibid.

Dr. Culley had used rats as his test subjects. The purpose of this study was to "determine the effects of various periods of undernutrition on the growth and composition of the rat brain."[178] In the beginning of Dr. Culley's article, "Effect of Undernutrition on the size and Composition of the Rat Brain," he explained why he performed these experiments. Dr. Culley reported that a major problem in the U.S. and world-wide was undernutrition. Despite this growing issue, Dr. Culley argued that research lacked on the mental developmental impacts of children during infancy, which could negatively impact children later in life.

Dr. Culley conducted tests and observations on rats' brains through comparing properly fed rats' brains versus malnourished rats' brains. In fact, Dr. Culley argued that, "Animal studies provide a reasonable means of obtaining information relevant to this problem, and data from such studies will undoubtedly aid in the understanding of the effect of undernutrition on the brain growth and composition of children. "[179] He hoped to discover if, why, and how undernutrition caused children to suffer from "retardation" as they grew and how to cure them from "retardation."

After spending over 100 days testing and observing these rats, Dr. Culley's findings upheld his hypothesis. He reported, "Undernutrition during the postnatal period caused a deficit in brain DNA."[180] This meant that the undernourished rat brain would not be as fully developed as the nourished rat brain when it reached maturity. Through

[178] William J. Culley, "Effect of Undernutrition on the Size and Composition of the Rat Brain," *The Journal of Nutrition* 96 (1968): 375.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid., 380.

animal testing, this showed Dr. Culley that if an infant lacked nutrition the brain would not fully develop, thus causing the child to become "retarded."

Dr. Culley's success in the rat experiment led to him taking this study to the next level, screenings on infants. Dr. Culley discovered undernourished infants had an increased likelihood of suffering from "mental retardation" as they grew. He developed a screening which involved testing infants' blood samples for "inborn errors."[181] He accomplished this by taking fingertip and heel blood samples from infants to test their amino acid metabolisms.[182]

Dr. Culley tested 1,117 infants.[183] He believed that through analyzing blood samples, he could predict eight of the thirty known mental abnormalities that cause someone to be "mentally retarded."[184] Dr. Culley believed that if doctors caught these abnormalities soon after a child's birth, action could be taken to prevent these children from becoming "retarded." For example, during Culley's study he learned that this diagnostic screening could catch an already well-known inherited metabolic disease, phenylketonuria (PKU).[185] This disease, found in some infants, caused the body to improperly consume some proteins from milk. These proteins then apparently stayed in the brain and produced build-up, which in turn "retarded" the development of the person. Through these tests, parents could catch this metabolic disease early enough to put their children on medicine that already existed which prevented the proteins from clogging the

[181] William J. Culley, "A Rapid and Simple Thin-Layer Chromatographic Method for Amino Acids in Blood," *Clinical Chemistry* 15 no. 9 (1969): 902.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid., 906.
[184] "Biochemists Develop Test for Retardation," 17.
[185] Ibid.

brain, thus reducing "mental retardation."[186] By 1965 doctors knew of 100 known PKU cases in Indiana, most of who lived at Muscatatuck State School and the Fort Wayne institution. Therefore, these patients inspired Culley to develop this test in attempts to cure part of the "mentally retarded" population.

Dr. Culley's work linked Muscatatuck to a changing ideology about how to treat people with mental disabilities. Since the late nineteenth century, physicians and scientists associated with the eugenics movement had a particularly brutal mindset concerning how to treat "mentally defective" people. For example, Illinois doctor Dr. Harry J. Haiselden would allow "defective" infants to die after he delivered them.[187] Other eugenicists urged compulsory sterilizations or pushed for "mentally defective" people to not marry. Many early eugenicists believed that once a person was diagnosed as "mentally deficient" they would always be, which is why these thinkers of the day implemented methods to control this marginalized population, specifically through segregation and sterilization.

Unlike physicians with eugenic ideals who tried to prevent certain groups of people from reproducing or existing, Dr. Culley focused on attempting to "cure" people. He directed Muscatatuck, as well as other institutions throughout the state and nation, away from a fatalistic perspective and medicalized "mental retardation" through creating a diagnostic test to detect potential mental disabilities early enough to treat them. Rather than viewing someone as permanently "cursed" and therefore needing to forever be locked up and stripped of the rights to marry and reproduce, Dr. Culley upheld more of

[186] Ibid.
[187] Pernick, *The Black Stork,* 3.

an “ableist” outlook, the idea that “mental retardation” was something that needed to be fixed and could be fixed. Thus, in his mind, the procedure could help infants grow into mentally functioning adults.

Though Muscatatuck was a product of the national eugenics movement, the institution operated outside of eugenic practices as the twentieth century progressed and ideas of mental health and how to treat people with mental disabilities evolved. Following this final chapter is a brief conclusion which summarizes how Muscatatuck’s role changed up until it closed and how its story is preserved today.

Conclusion: Epilogue

In the years 1967 and 1968 Muscatatuck State School saw great change, both in forms of treatment and in its institutional philosophies.[188] The institution's leaders phased out the old farm colony model and worked with the American Association on Mental Deficiency to form new institutional goals.[189] These goals included reducing admissions and increasing the release of patients who no longer needed to be institutionalized. By 1969 Muscatatuck leadership instituted behavior management programs and two community projects. This change was a continuation of changes Muscatatuck implemented since the 1930s and 1940s (as discussed in chapter two), and it led to Muscatatuck completely turning away from the old colony format traditions and embracing this new community and project-based model of therapy.

In the 1970s Muscatatuck underwent another name change, from Muscatatuck State School to Muscatatuck State Hospital and Training Center.[190] By the mid-1970s Muscatatuck leadership focused on individualized treatments for patients. In March of 1974 they executed the Module System. In 2005 the Muscatatuck State Hospital and Training Center Administration staff compiled a research binder to showcase Muscatatuck's history. Within this binder was an explanation for how this Module System operated.

Through the Module System, Muscatatuck leadership and staff attempted to provide more accessible care for the patients based on the re-organization and re-

[188] Administration Staff, *History Binder: Muscatatuck Memories*.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid.

assignments of responsibilities. While Muscatatuck leadership instituted programs before the Module System, this new method created more focused programs for the patients and allowed Muscatatuck staff, who were increasingly specialized professionally (nursing, social work, etc.), to work in their specific fields through forming various departments to accommodate their specialties. The improvement of programs increased after the passage of the 1975 Special Education Law.[191] After the Indiana legislature passed this law Muscatatuck leadership no longer allowed children under the age of six to be admitted.

Muscatatuck continued to evolve in treatment for people with mental disabilities as the 1970s advanced. By August of 1977 Muscatatuck was officially certified as an Intermediate Care Facility for people with mental disabilities under Title XIX program (Medicaid).[192] To earn this certification Muscatatuck met over 600 standards set in place by the federal government. The 2005 administration staff reported, "The next decade witnessed expansion of group home residential programs in the state and drastically changed the population at Muscatatuck."[193] In fact, by 1984, Muscatatuck reduced the population to around 836 patients and the name once again changed from the Muscatatuck State Hospital and Training Center to the Muscatatuck Developmental Center.[194]

On April 19, 2001, Indiana Governor Frank O'Bannon announced that Muscatatuck would close by June 30, 2003. In 2005, the state of Indiana transferred the property over to the Indiana National Guard. On April 7, 2011, Muscatatuck re-opened as

[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.

the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC) for the National Guard soldiers.[195] According MUTC's site, the training center "offers users a globally unique, urban and rural, multi-domain operating environment that is recognized as the Department of Defense's (DOD's) largest urban training facility serving those who work to defend the homeland and win the peace."[196] Soldiers travel nationwide to experience this method of immersive training. They enter a simulative environment where they learn how to conduct rescue missions, operate military weaponry, learn how to react in states of emergencies and learn how to work as a team, and even role-play potential real life scenarios they might face in combat.[197]

A unique part of this new military base is how the National Guard staff continue to maintain Muscatatuck's historic integrity and share the history of the property. In 2011 after MUTC opened, the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service reported that before the site opened, "a promise was made that the history of the facility would be preserved."[198] The Indiana National Guard staff at MUTC decided to uphold this promise by opening the Muscatatuck Museum, located in one of the original buildings of the institution. The museum utilizes material culture by displaying the tools, games, books,

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[195] Bradley Staggs, "Museum Honoring Former 'Muscatatuck State School' Opens at Muscatatuck," *DVIDS*, (Butlerville, IN), Apr. 7, 2011, accessed online on April 10, 2019 at: https://www.dvidshub.net/news/68457/museum-honoring-former-muscatatuck-state-school-opens-muscatatuck.

[196] "Muscatatuck Urban Training Center - As Real as It Gets," About Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, accessed online on March 10, 2020 at: https://www.atterburymuscatatuck.in.ng.mil/Muscatatuck/About-Muscatatuck-Urban-Training-Center/.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Staggs, "Museum Honoring Former 'Muscatatuck State School."

lessons plans, toys, and various other objects that inmates/patients/residents, doctors, and staff used throughout the mental institution's lifetime.

On April 18, 2019, I had the opportunity to visit this museum. Its focus is primarily on Muscatatuck during the 1950s and onward. While the museum did provide a timeline of how the institution evolved, it did not offer a wide discussion on the institution's role in the national eugenics movement, nor was there much information on Muscatatuck's role in compulsory sterilizations. Katherine Speers, MSG Bradley Stagg's assistant, guided my tour. She explained that they as a museum need to be careful with the information they share out of respect for past patients and out of caution for not violating HIPAA. The Muscatatuck Museum is an excellent place for learning about how this facility operated from the mid-twentieth century to when it closed in 2005. Another special aspect of MUTC is that many of the original buildings still exist, as soldiers use them for training, including underground tunnels that connect to each of these original buildings. According to Speers, Muscatatuck staff used these tunnels to transport patients from building-to-building in case of inclement weather.

Today, the Jennings County Historical Society and the Muscatatuck Museum work together to preserve the history and story of Muscatatuck. In 2011, Dr. William Culley expressed his joy about there being a museum on the new military base. "I think this is a great thing…The hospital meant so much to the community that it's wonderful to see it remembered in this way."[199]

Muscatatuck's history is intricate and cannot simply be labeled as a negative or positive aspect of Indiana history. Indiana leaders originally founded Muscatatuck to

[199] Ibid.

control who they characterized as the “feeble-minded” population. At Muscatatuck the institution’s leaders worked to segregate the “feeble-minded” from society and even had hundreds of their patients sterilized. However, by middle of the twentieth century, ideologies on people with mental disabilities and how to care for them shifted. People like Dr. William Culley started researching ways to help children mentally develop. The institution’s guiding principles slowly moved away from a eugenic and fatalistic mindset and the reliance on the farm colony format, especially when Muscatatuck leadership instituted more programs. While the institution has never been perfect and continued to face obstacles and make what we view now in the twenty-first century as mistakes, Muscatatuck’s existence is one of complexity and helps us gain a better understanding about Indiana’s eugenic roots and its evolving role in mental health throughout the twentieth century.

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Curriculum Vitae

Abigail Nicole Bragg

Education

IUPUI. Indianapolis, Indiana. September 2020.

- Master of Arts from Indiana University in Public History

IUPUI. Indianapolis, Indiana. May 2017.

- Bachelor of Arts in History. Minors in Corporate and Organizational Communication and Public and Professional Writing.

Professional Experience

March 2020 – Present Conner Prairie, Fishers, Indiana.

June 2016 – March 2020 Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana.

August 2019 – March 2020 Indiana State Museum, Indianapolis, Indiana.

August 2018 – May 2019 Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Presentations

November 2019, The Lost Histories of Indiana Conference. Bloomington, Indiana.

- "Indiana's Haunted Asylums"

Honors

May 2020

- Selected as a member of the IUPUI Elite 50 and Premiere 10.

Professional Memberships

2016 – Present American Alliance of Museums

2017-2018 National Council on Public History